

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION PROFILE

ALACIS, Russia and landscape architecture in the CIS since Soviet times

by Ilya Mochalov

The history of Russian landscape architecture differs from that of much of Europe. Its development has been halting, with little progress in the 1920s after the Revolution. However, this changed in 1930, when the Masterplan for expanding Moscow (GENPLAN) was developed with, as a principle, green wedges of forestry defining new development. In consequence Moscow is now one of Europe's greenest cities. There are 450 km² of green zones and 100 km² of forest and there are an average 27m² of parks per person in Moscow (compared with 6 m² for Paris, and 7.5 m² in London). The Genplan model was to become a model for urban expansion throughout the Soviet Union.

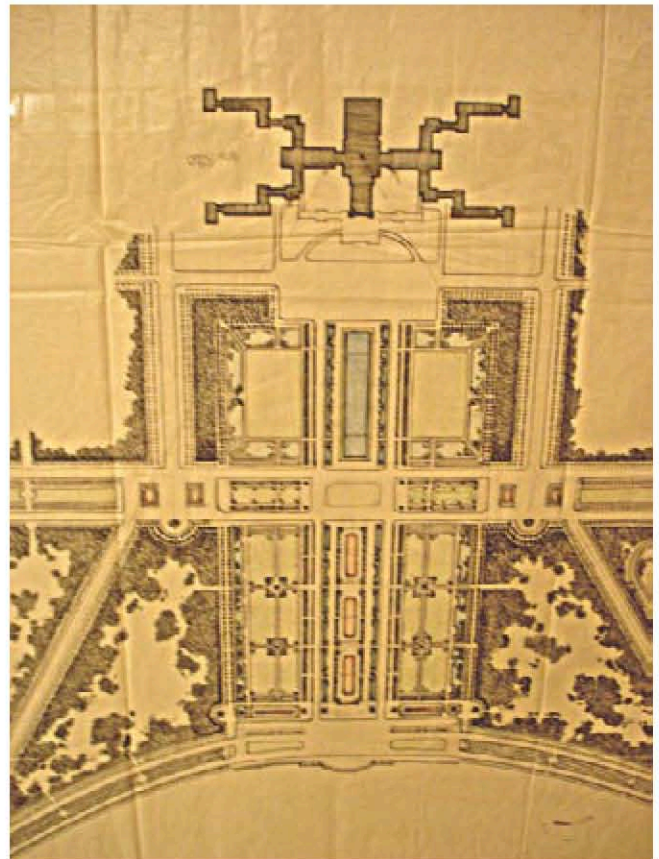
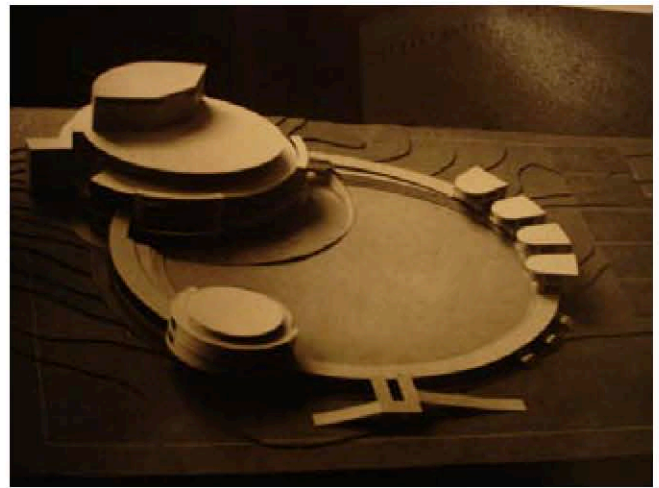
Beginnings

In 1935 the oldest agricultural school in Russia, the Timiryazev Agricultural Academy in Moscow, started a pilot project of teaching students the profession of a landscape architect (in the Municipal Services and Construction Department). Later on departments of green urban design and construction were opened at Schools of Forestry in Moscow (set up in 1948), Saint-Petersburg (then called Leningrad) and other cities.

However, the 1930s and 1940s were times when Soviet society was isolated from the outside world, unable to exchange design ideas with foreign landscape designers and apply such ideas to improve town centres, residential areas.

The influence of Ladovsky.

Nikolay Ladovsky, however, was very influential. Nikolai Alexandrovich Ladovsky (1881-1941), was a Russian Constructivist architect. Ladovsky graduated from the Moscow School of painting, sculpture and architecture in 1917. From 1920 he taught at the first Soviet architectural school, so called "The All-Union Artistic Workshops" (VKhUTEMAS) as one of the directors of the basic course. He became the principle theorist of the rationalist approach to architecture and was one of the founding members of the Association of New Architects (ASNOVA). His influence was great. Since 1923 his most talented pupils such as M. Korzhev, V. Petrov, C. Glagolev and the others started to implement the theory of spatial arrangements as the base for the landscape architectural education. One of the remarkable projects of that time is the Central park of Culture and Recreation or Gorky Park, named after M.



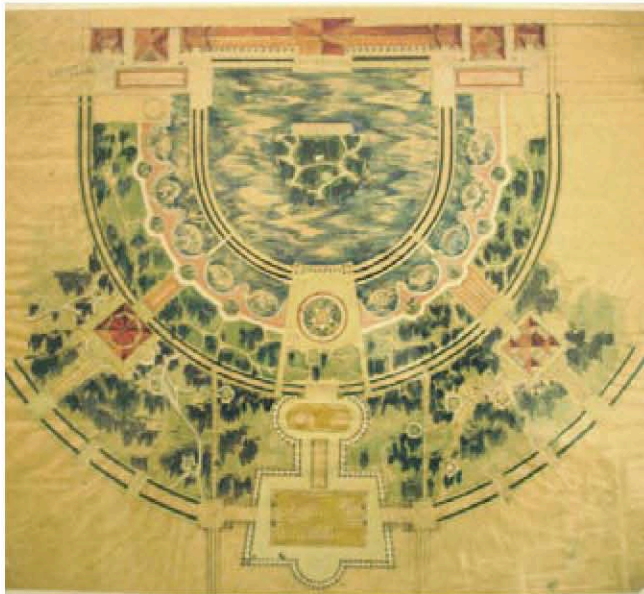
- ▲ above top: Synthetic theatre in Sverdlovsk. Photograph of the model. 1931. Competition entry. ASNOVA team: M.Korzhev, L. Zalesskaja, A.Korobov, L.Rozenberg.
- ▲ above bottom: the parterre of Lomonosov University. Master plan. 1953-1955. M. Korzhev, M. Prohorova.
- ▲ Left below: The parterre of Lomonosov University. Perspective. 1953-1955. M. Korzhev, M. Prohorova.

Gorky (1929-1932) - architects A. Vlasov and V. Dolganov, with landscape architect M. Korzhev. Another exceptional example is Stalin Park of Culture and recreation in Izmailovo (1931-1945) - landscape architect M. Korzhev.

The 1950s as a Golden Age

The School of Ladovsky developed rationalism. Many of his pupils became well known professionals specializing in restoration and conservation of historic parks and estates of the aristocracy. Those who contributed to the beginnings of landscape architecture in Russia included L. Zalesskaya, M. Korzhev, S. Palentreer, V. Dolganov, and M. Prokhorova. They developed and took part in creating more than 150 projects of landscape design. The period 1945-1960 was the "golden age" of greening Moscow, when the capital of





▲ Above top: Details of the parterre of Lomonosov University. Sketches. 1953-1955. M. Korzhev, M. Prohorova.

▲ Above bottom: The entrance parterre of the Izmailovo Stalin Park of Culture and recreation. Masterplan. 1931-1945. M. Korzhev, M. Prohorova.

▲ Below right under: Garden pavilions in the Izmailovo Stalin Park of Culture and recreation. Sketches. 1931-1945. M. Korzhev, M. Prohorova.

the country became not only an example for Soviet cities and towns, but was also of the world-wide significance. In 1956 L. Zalesskaya founded the Soviet Society of Landscape Architecture (SALA).

One project is particularly worth mentioning is the landscape design of the campus of The Lomonosov Moscow State University, located on the Lenin Hills in Moscow (now renamed the Vorobiev Hills). Mikhail Korzhev was the senior landscape architect responsible for that project (1953-1955). 1960s and education cutbacks.

However, in the 1960s due to changes in government policy there were in consequence changes in the development of higher education nationally and a policy of consolidation of faculties resulting in closure of almost all landscape departments. Professionals teaching landscape architecture had to defend their profession, improve higher education, and raise the role of the landscape architecture in creating harmony around us. The key role of preserving the history of the profession was taken up by Moscow Technical Forestry Institute (since Moscow State Forestry University), where the department of Green Space Design and Construction existed until 2000, when the Faculty was again re-established.

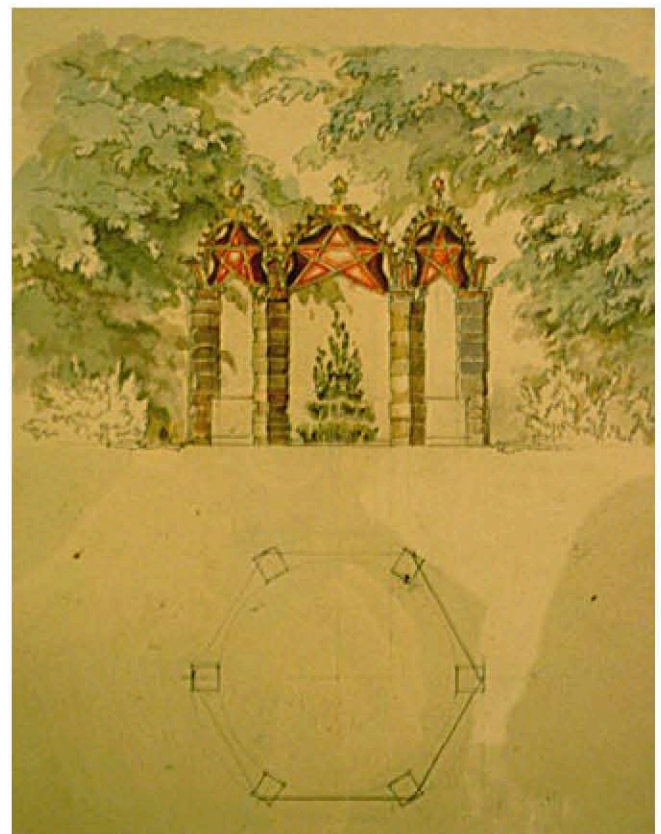
Membership of IFLA

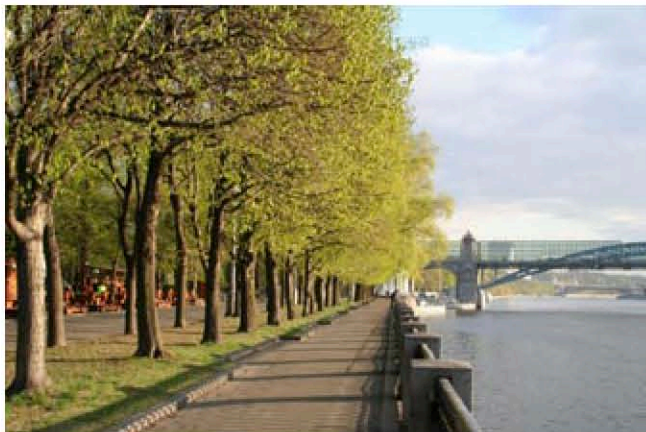
Mrs Taisia Volftrub, a landscape professional and public figure became the leader of the Soviet Association of Landscape Architects (SALA) in the 1970s. The members of the Association tried to lead teams to do different things additional to teaching, such as landscape analysis, designs of gardens and other elements of landscape architecture for private villas, cottage settlements and big estates, that have mushroomed in the countryside around Moscow in the post-Soviet years. In 1983 Mrs. Volftrub, together with her colleagues, attended the XXth Congress of the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) in Hungary - the first congress where professionals from the USSR were present - and SALA became a member of IFLA in 1988. Rebirth of the profession in the 21st century.

The most important date of the started new Millennium was the 31 May 2002, when the Ministry of Labour of the Russian Federation has issued a special decree stating that Landscape architecture is recognized as an individual profession. In 2006 professionals involved with landscape architecture, urban planning and design in Russia were happy to celebrate the 50th anniversary of their association that initiated the formation and further evolution of the profession. The harder the times for the profession, the stronger has been the desire for increasing the status of a landscape architect in the urban environment.

Education

Currently there are seventeen landscape schools in the Russian Federation united in the Russian Council for Education in the Field of Landscape Architecture. The seventeen schools are of different types and backgrounds of higher educational schools and universities: architecture, agricultural, forestry, civil engineering with landscape architecture teaching and there is a demand of high-quality specialists in Landscape Architecture. But there is a paucity





▲ The photographs show the Central park of Culture and Recreation, named after M. Gorkij. Architects: A.Vlasov, V. Dolganov, landscape architect M. Korzhev. 2006. Picture above top is a present time photograph of The Grand Entrance, below is the Moskva River Embankment.

of educational programmes formally called Landscape Architecture, formally the model tends to be a five year diploma programme for Engineer of Green Spaces Design & Construction and a three year doctorate; or alternatively five year full time diploma programme in architecture with a specialization in landscape architecture.

Key dates:

- 1948 Moscow Technical Forestry Institute (MTFI), Faculty of Green Spaces, Design & Construction established,
- 1955: MSFI Faculty closed,
- 1955-2000: Department of Green Spaces, Design & Construction in the Faculty of Forestry of MTFI (which was renamed Moscow State Forestry University in 1993).
- 1955-present: Department of Landscape Architecture

Moscow Architecture University established (MARKHI)
 • 2000-present: Faculty of Landscape Architecture Moscow State Forestry University

The effects of Bologna

Higher education in Russia is currently changing due to the Bologna Declaration, of which Russia is a signatory, with new educational standards for Landscape Architecture with Bachelor and Master programmes leading to a new model of: 1st cycle four years Bachelor degree and 2nd cycle four years Master degree, with a change of workload system and change to ECTS.

The scope of ALACIS

After the disintegration of the USSR in 1991-92 SALA became ALACIS (the Association of Landscape Architects of the Community of Independent States). Mrs. Volfrub was elected ALACIS President in 1993 and, after several re-elections, still holds this position. ALACIS covers landscape architects in Russia, Belarus and Ukraine and is formed with active regional associations in Novosibirsk, Nizhnij Novgorod, Moscow, S. Peterburg, Ekaterinburg, Joshkar-Ola, Kiev, and Minsk. The Association has a very challenging time now as the result of the political pressure which the State is putting on non-governmental organisations.

Current challenges

Current development challenges for ALACIS are:

- re-registration process for all non-government organisations in the Russian Federation,
- professional definition,
- establishing itself as a full member of EFLA,
- developing proper educational standards of Landscape Architecture for Bachelor and Master programmes in Europe meeting European professional requirements for BLA and MLA graduates.
- exchange of students, inviting visiting professors from foreign universities teaching in our school.

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◀ Photos of the 50 years anniversary of Soviet association of Landscape architects (SALA). Moscow, 2006. Picture on the left, from left to right: Ms. Taissia Volfrub, President of ALACIS, Mr. Valentin Ivanov, President of Moscow Association of Landscape Architects, Mr. Victor Logvinov, President of Moscow Union Of Architects.